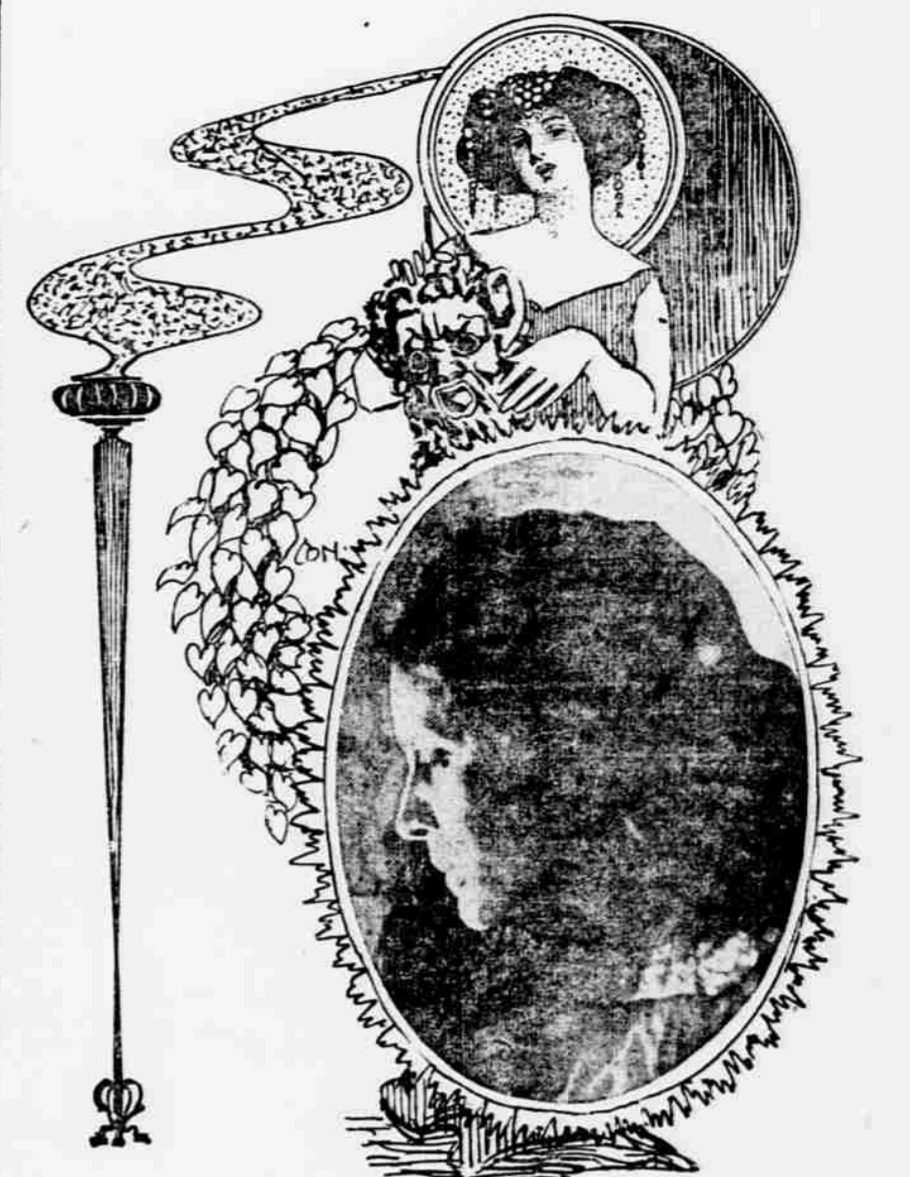


THE MASSACRE OF DONALD MACLEAN AND HIS HIGHLANDERS: AMOS STEBBINS'S MARCH TO THE RELIEF OF FORT CHARLOTTE.

A Tale of the Frontier.

By ROBERT BARR.

INTERESTING Paragraphs From the Autobiography of
Madame Duse, Who Comes to St. Louis This Week.



ELEONORA DUSE.

(From a photograph taken at Genoa shortly before she sailed for America.)

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.
Eleonora Duse, who comes to St. Louis for the first time this week, has written her memoirs. They exhibit in a wonderful way the strange temperament of this artist.

When she was last in the United States a great deal was written about the fact that she always refused to be interviewed. The state of mind revealed by her memoirs explains this attitude towards the public.

The memoirs say that she has preserved the identity of the letters throughout. Her duties as the editor consisted principally in a methodical arrangement of the material placed at her disposal.

Eleonora Duse's memoirs begin as follows: Reminiscences?

No, I don't want to remember. I am what I am.

What I have been is past. Ah! if I could only forget my disappointments, my struggles, my misadventures.

No, I must not forget the battles I have fought—not these, but everything else, everything.

Still, can it be done?

Time and again our thoughts travel back to things and events that happened.

One cannot help remembering what has, at one period of our life, torn our heart, made it bleed and tremble, made it cower and suffer.

We cannot escape the thoughts of what has been and does exist in spite of us.

They are like mildew on the leaves of our mental diary.

QUESTIONS FROM STRANGE MEN AND WOMEN.

And then come men and women—persons you have never seen—strangers for whom you care not and who do not care for you—to inquire who you are and what you are; what you feel, what you think.

They want to know all about your past. When you refuse to receive them, when you do not answer their questions, they call you cold, full of prejudices, arrogant.

Arrogant, and why?

Because you will not tell them what you are afraid to tell yourself—what frightens you, what you mean to keep a secret from your own heart.

Events of my life?

There are many of them, but what looks to me like an event, an occurrence, that perhaps forced upon me the part I am now playing in the world, the mark-ones of my life—in short, to another they may appear as a mere detail, an unimportant accident.

Yes, I have had many experiences; too many, but they were not experiences that sense which the sensation-hungry mob alone recognizes.

They were more like trials—trials that have cost me much tears, and the remembrance of which makes me cry, cry, cry every time when I play Lydia in *Morane* in the drama "Visitors at the Wedding."

I feel then as if my soul were ready to go out with one great sob.

It was twelve years ago, in Rio.

The yellow fever went from house to house, from palace to hut, gathering in victims.

We play-actors played.

One day at rehearsal Diotti appeared with the pallor of death on his brow, tired, hardly able to stand on his feet.

"What ails thee? For God's sake, tell!"

"Nothing; a strange feeling. My head is not right—come, let us make a start."

And he did begin.

I saw he was not himself.

I saw him tremble as if shaken by intense cold.

BROKE DOWN IN MIDST OF EXCITING SITUATION.

"Do not attempt the impossible," I said.

"I am going to close the theater."

"And thy fortune? he made answer.

"All thy money is at stake."

"I will be better to-night."

"Let us proceed with rehearsal."

Suddenly, in the midst of an exciting situation, he broke down.

It was the fever.

The fever that never lets up on a being marked for destruction.

What were we to do?

We had to play, because we were under contract.

We had to play, because a good many tickets had been sold.

supply was cached at the river bank, for fighting men must travel light. There was no need to return for it. The larger of the Indians was easily found. Frozen deer were hanging from the lower branches of trees. Fountains of fat wild turkeys, the most delicious game in the world to roast, were suspended from sapling to sapling. Baskets of dried berries were in plenty, for the Indians look well to the commissariat when in camp.

"I don't suppose these Indians thought they were provisioning Fort Charlotte when they collected this provender," said Amos drily. "This is an uncertain world, boys. Anyhow, we'll give the folks a bang-up good Christmas dinner, as if the grocer hadn't sent anything in since I left. I'll guarantee they won't be in complaints about the food."

"Amos," commented one of his men, "you've been so long awake that you've lost count of your own age. We'd ought to have given you Christmas dinner before you left the settlement, so's you'd remember. To-day's day after Christmas. You've lost track of time."

"No, I ain't, Sam," replied the imperious Amos, in the rough, snarl, the sort of day of deliverance for poor benighted human sinners like you and me. When deliverance comes, then the day it comes is Christmas, whatever the calendar says. Don't you tie too much to dates, Sam.

We had to play, because the Shylakian impresario wanted his pound of flesh. We had to play while he was lying alone, deserted, fighting the battle of death.

On the first evening—"Fedora."

The house, as stated, sold out, and I—a failure in all that the word implies—nobody had known the difference.

Add to this that there was a continuous whispering and murmuring in all parts of the house, in the boxes, in the galleries, everywhere, all the time, from the beginning up to the curtain's fall.

My heart, my head, my voice—they seemed not to belong to me at all.

I had no power over either.

I was thinking of him all the time; of him alone.

At last the performance closed.

I sat home, and in the darkness of my room threw myself on the floor.

I had never felt so lonely before.

Next day—intermission.

We played only three times in the week. The newspapers gave their final decision.

They said I had a certain something about me that attracted attention, but my voice—well, half of what I said they could not hear, and the other half they were unable to understand.

The day following we had our second performance, "Denise."

The theater—that immense barn—empty. Only three or four rows of seats were taken, and to the right and left two or three boxes.

My poor Denise, so simple, so devoid of all sensational elements—no toilets to speak of, no jewels—the audience listened to her during the first act.

AUDIENCE CRIED WITH HER IN ONE SCENE.

They paid her some attention in the second act.

In the third act I had a crying scene, and I cried real tears, and the audience cried with me.

Mine was victory, but the battle was not entirely won yet, for the part of Fernando was essayed by another.

His who had been my Fernando was still battling with death.

And the thought of him, the patient sufferer, would never cease to agitate me that evening.

It stood between me and the part I was trying to play.

He always was before me, cold, pallid, shaking, his features distorted and his eyes dim.

In vain did I try to throw off this feeling. In vain did I argue with myself that art demands from its followers the sacrifice of self-regard.

I could not be otherwise.

He was always before me that poor man, that ghost, who never harmed anybody in the world.

He was to die amid strangers, while we, his friends, played comedy.

Consign him, then, to the oblivion of the theater, to the oblivion of the world.

And there before those glorious, those blessed looks—

I played—"Fedora," gave my friend.

Save him, for he was a father and a mother, whose only hope in life he is.

Save him and take me in his stead.

Let me die, then, in this evening—my reason, my talents, my courage—but save him.

Two days later and all was at an end.

And we continued playing comedy.

As to my self, I never succumbed upon success, and every triumph I earned increased my sorrow, made me more wretched.

On the evening of *Denise's* death day I played *Fedora*.

And then and there I became what I am. Then and there I felt for the first time that I had a heart, that I had soul and blood in that heart.

And then and there I learned that life is not always so pitiful and hard to bear. This I felt.

Do you call it an event?

I don't know whether it is important enough to be so classed by others.

As for me it was the main stone of my life.

A life—in a life.

Christmas can come in mid-summer as well as in mid-winter. Now, two of you get a pole and string on them baskets of berries. Each of the rest of you take a turkey, till you've got 'em all. Others chop up this venison and take as much as you can carry. Then we'll make for Fort Charlotte, and they'll be glad to see us then if we was in any hurry.

The laden party went silently through the forest, one following another, taking as much precaution as if the woods were still their enemy. Progress was slow, and the reluctant belated daylight had come before they reached the clearing round Fort Charlotte.

"Merry Christmas!" shouted Amos in his loudest voice.

One head, then another and another appeared above the parapets. It was long since the denizens of the fort dared show scalp above the logs, and even now there was a crouching attitude of the shoulders, as if each man were ready to duck.

"That you, Amos? Thank the good Lord!" "Merry Christmas, I said Jim!" responded Amos.

"Is this Christmas? We'd forgotten all about it. Well, the same to you, Amos; same to you."

"There," said Amos to Sam. "What did I tell you? of course it's Christmas if you only think so."

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WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

Christmas morning broke clear and cold. The newly arisen sun shed a brilliance on the scene as absent of all warmth as moonlight. The little band of Highlanders, numbering scarce a hundred all told, were marshaled in front of the stockade, and all the inhabitants had turned out to see them off.

The river, which ran at the foot of the stockade, was now silent, having put on a sheath of armor which glittered like steel in the cold rays of the early sun. Although it was the 25th of December there was no snow on the ground, which rang hard as cast iron under the heels of those who trod on it.

The bare knees of the Highland company were as red in the shivering air as the skin of the foe they expected to meet. The kilt seemed a most unsuitable dress for such an inclement climate, but Captain Donald Maclean, surveying his company with satisfaction as he strode before it. He knew every man was to be depended upon, and such knowledge brings comfort to an officer.

Amos Moray, talented musician and composer, was tuning his pipes, and the shrill notes of the wild instrument sounded clear-cut and sharp in the still air.

For several hundred yards around the stockade and on the further bank of the river the thick forest had been completely cleared and the stumps blasted away, so that no cover might be left for the Indians, in overwhelming numbers, to cross the clear space that exposed them to rifle fire from behind the stockades.

People from within the pallisade looked with admiration at the brave display; all but one man, who stood aside, a frown on his face, and a brown, nervous hand gently pulling the gaiters that hid his legs in buckskin jacket and leather leggings, with deerskin moccasins on his feet, while his other extremity was covered by a cap hanging down behind over his shoulder.

A knife was sheathed in his belt, ready to his right hand, and he was leaning on his crooked elbow, a dilapidated looking rifle, the butt seemingly fastened to the barrel by a piece of buckskin. A powder-horn swung at his waist, and some pouches completed his picturesque outfit. His countenance might have been a model to any artist for a picture of a personage not yet born, to be known ultimately as Uncle Sam.

Amos Stebbins stood aloof from all those present, for he was a stranger who had but just arrived. He watched the parade gloomily, and yet he himself was the cause of it, for the night before he had made his way through the thirty miles of forest from Fort Charlotte, bringing to the stockade the news of his distress and a cry for help. It is some indication of the endurance of the man that he had been traveling all night and had barely an hour's sleep, but was now ready for the war path again.

To this lone figure Captain Maclean turned and said brusquely:

"Well, my man, are you ready?"

"Ready for what?" asked Amos, with a slow drawl.

"Ready to guide us to Fort Charlotte, of course," rejoined the officer, impatiently.

"That is what you are here for, I take it."

"Before I answer your question," replied Stebbins, "I must ask you two or three of my own."

"Excuse me, my good fellow," said Stebbins, unabashed, "I am a free man, and I give way to the general safety, and so far as power goes I am in possession of it. I can order you out to be shot as a rebel to authority, and will not even be court-martialed because of it."

"That can you not," said Amos, calmly, "because at the first move to lay hands on me I'll send a bullet through your heart, and all your men cannot save you."

"Who induces in threats now?" asked Captain Maclean, apparently unafraid.

"It was but giving you a warning in return for your caution to me."

"It was quite unnecessary," replied the Captain; "for I had no intention of coercing you." The question is, Are you to guide us to Fort Charlotte, or are you not?

"Do you intend to take your men through a body with that squealing devil among them?" asked Amos, with a contemptuous wave of his hand toward the pipe.

"Certainly," answered the Captain.

"Then you need no guide. The way is perfectly clear. For twenty miles there is a rough cart road until you come to the log house which was burnt, after that you will find a path through the forest to Fort Charlotte. The way is blazed, and even you cannot miss it."

"You will not go with us, then?"

"No."

"You are afraid?"

"Yes."

"You admit yourself to be a coward?"

"And I was told you were a great Indian fighter."

"The Indians are more afraid of me and my one damaged rifle than you and your hundred men, and they have reason to be."

"You won't march with us?"

"No."

"You prefer a warm Christmas dinner in the stockade to a cold meal in the forest," said the officer, sarcastically.

"Who wouldn't?" inquired Amos.

"Captain Maclean gazed upon the imperturbable bushranger with a smile of easy tolerance.

"If you were in command, what would you do?"

"I would tie up that windbag with his screaming tubes and leave it in the stockade with half of your men to see that it didn't break loose again. The other half I should put into some sensible dress, cover up their knees, place moccasins on their feet instead of those clumsy, buck-skin boots, and give them woolen or buckskin mittens for their hands. Then I should wait till night fell and lead them up the river on the ice. I would inflict the death penalty on any man who regarded or made a noise louder than a shadow makes in passing. At certain points they would have to crawl in Indian file on their hands and knees in the deepest shadow of the highest bank. The way is longer and crookier than the wood road, but we would reach Fort Charlotte before day broke."

"But suppose you were spied? We would be in a trap on the ice with the Indians on the high banks."

"We would not be spied, Captain; but if we were, we would lie low in the shadow and let them fire in the darkness."

"Captain Maclean laughed heartily and cried: "Well, my brave woodlander, you counsel greater precautions than if we had to meet a European army. I see the Indians have frightened you, so I think a stern lesson is needed."

"I quite agree with you," said Stebbins, drily. "A lesson is needed, but who shall be teacher and who pupil is another matter."

"There is no question about that," added the Captain, confidently.

"None in my mind, Captain," replied Amos.

"The short and long of it is, sir," said the Captain severely, "that you prefer the while we are fighting for the lives of your comrades in Fort Charlotte?"

"No, Captain, I cannot remain in the stockade. I go at once to the settlement and let them fire in the darkness."

"I shall collect a score or more of my own stripe, who know nothing of marching, countermarching, and right wheeling; men who are acquainted with the woods and the Indians. At the head of this band I shall go myself to the relief of Fort Charlotte."

"Exactly, Captain."

"And you will remain here in shelter while we are fighting for the lives of your comrades in Fort Charlotte?"

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"Exactly, Captain."

He turned to the backwoodsman and shouted to his pipe:

"Are you ready, Angus?"

"Aye, sir."

"Then let us have 'The March to Battle.'"

The pipes burst forth with the stirring strain, the player's foot beating time on the hard ground. At a word from the commander the little company set forth, keeping step to the martial music and headed by the brave piper, the resonant drones flung over his shoulder and the ribbons fluttering as he strode along. In a few minutes the forest had swallowed them up, but through the crisp air came back the ever-living music of the march, and none of the spectators moved until at last silence fell once more on the stockade, then Amos Stebbins threw his rifle over his shoulder, breathed a deep sigh and slouched off in the direction of the settlement, murmuring to himself, "Poor fellows, poor fellows."

Meanwhile the doomed company tramped briefly along the rough cart road through the forest. All nature seemed frozen into a silence that was broken only by the impact of well-shod feet on the iron-hard road, and even that sound seemed deadened as they penetrated further and further into the forest, for the dried leaves that had fallen in the autumn made a thick carpet under foot. The pipe soon ceased to play, and the only breath for his tramping. Now and then the stillness was shattered by a sharp crack like a rifle shot, but the Highlanders knew this to be the action of the forest on a tree here and there, for the weather grew colder as the day advanced. The gloom of the forest seemed to affect the spirits of the marchers. They trudged on in silence, the excitement of the piping and the tramp were too much for his exhausted body, so he ceased to play and stumbled stubbornly on for more than two hours, when he saw ahead of him a red glow in the darkness of the forest. 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